

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the above amendments and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are pending. In the present amendment, Claims 1-3, 10-12, and 18 are currently amended. Support for the present amendment can be found in the original specification, for example, at page 12, lines 9-17 and in Figure 8. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-4 and 9-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; Claims 1-4, 9, 11-13, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as unpatentable over Ichikawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,126,315, hereinafter “Ichikawa”); Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Ichikawa in view of Shinji et al. (Japanese Patent Publication No. 2001-072030, hereinafter “Shinji”); Claims 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Ichikawa in view of Shinji; Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Ichikawa; and Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Ichikawa in view of Pryor et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,529,396, hereinafter “Pryor”).

Initially, Applicants would like to thank Examiners Gregory Pickett and Rishi Verma for the courtesy extended to Applicants’ representative, Colin Harris, during the interview conducted on August 4, 2010. During the interview, Applicants representative explained that the self supporting bag was made by a molding process. Applicants’ representative further discussed the maintaining step recited in Claims 1 and 18, which is supported by the original specification at page 12, lines 9-17 and in Figure 8. The Examiners and Applicants’ representative discussed removing the “not flat” language and clarifying that the maintaining step is folding the bag such that the bag is L-shaped on both of the side portions to maintain

the self-supporting bag in a folded state. The Examiners agreed that such an amendment would overcome the art of record, but indicated that further searching would be needed.

Accordingly, the present amendment hereby amends independent Claims 1 and 18 to be consistent with the amendments discussed during the interview. Formal consideration of these amendments is hereby requested.

In response to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as discussed above, the “not flat” language was removed from Claims 1 and 18. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that each of the pending claims is definite. However, if the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned representative who will be happy to work with the Examiner to derive mutually acceptable language.

Turning now to the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as discussed above, during the interview it was agreed that the cited references do not teach the folding step.

Specifically, as can be seen in Figure 8, after the bag is folded flat, the bag is again folded by standing up both side portions of the body portion and the bottom portion in a width direction such that the self-supporting bag is L-shaped on both of the side portions to maintain a self supporting bag in a folded state.

As agreed, none of the cited references disclose or suggest forming the L-shaped folds on both sides to maintain their respective bags in folded state.

Further, independent Claims 1 and 18 have been amended to clarify that the self-supported bag is prepared by molding the main body of the bag. The container described in the primary reference, Ichikawa, is made by heat-sealing the front and rear surface portions to the gussets.<sup>1</sup> Further, Ichikawa repeatedly teaches away from making the container via a

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<sup>1</sup> See Ichikawa, at column 6, lines 62-65.

molding technique.<sup>2</sup> Thus, it would not be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the method of making the container described in Ichikawa to include molding the container.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

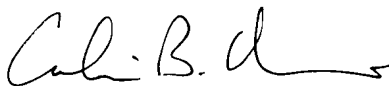
Respectfully submitted,

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<sup>2</sup> See Ichikawa, at column 2, lines 1-26 and column 6, lines 62-65.